

*Miss Prism.* This is indeed a surprise. We did not look for you till Monday afternoon.

*Jack.* [*Shakes Miss Prism's hand in a tragic manner.*] I have

returned sooner than I expected. Dr. Chasuble, I hope you are well?

*Chasuble.* Dear Mr. Worthing, I trust this garb of woe does not betoken some terrible calamity?

*Jack.* My brother,

*Miss Prism.* More shameful debts and extravagance?

*Chasuble.* Still leading his life of pleasure?

*Jack.* (*Shaking his head.*) Dead!

*Chasuble.* Your brother Ernest dead?

*Jack.* Quite dead.

*Miss Prism.* What a lesson for him! I trust he will profit by it.

*Chasuble.* Mr. Worthing, I offer you my sincere condolence.

You have at least the consolation of knowing that you were always the most generous and forgiving of brothers.

*Jack.* Poor Ernest! He had many faults, but it is a sad, sad blow.

*Chasuble.* Very sad indeed. Were you with him at the end?

*Jack.* No. He died abroad; in Paris, in fact. I had a telegram last night from the manager of the Grand Hotel.

*Chasuble.* Was the cause of death mentioned?

*Jack.* A severe chill, it seems.

*Miss Prism.* As a man sows, so shall he reap.

*Chasuble.* [*Raising his hand.*] Charity, dear Miss Prism, charity! None of us are perfect. I myself am peculiarly susceptible to draughts. Will the interment take place here?

*Jack.* No. He seems to have expressed a desire to be buried in Paris.

*Chasuble.* In Paris! [*Shakes his head.*] I fear that hardly points to any very serious state of mind at the last. You would no doubt wish me to make some slight allusion to this tragic domestic affliction next Sunday, [*Jack presses his hand convulsively.*] My sermon on the meaning of the manna in the wilderness can be adapted to almost any occasion,

joyful, or, as in the present case, distressing, [*All sigh.*]

I have preached it at harvest celebrations, christenings, confirmations, on days of humiliation and festal days. The last time I delivered it was in the Cathedral, as a charity sermon on behalf of the Society for the Prevention of Discontent among the Upper Orders. The Bishop, who was present, was much struck by some of the analogies I drew.